

The University of Chicago

THE CINCINNATI *DAILY ENQUIRER*
AND CIVIL WAR POLITICS: A
STUDY IN "COPPERHEAD"
OPINION

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

1934

By

CHARLES RAY WILSON

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The Cincinnati Daily Enquirer in 1860 was a typical Western, metropolitan, Democratic newspaper with an important rural clientele. Its sympathies were with neither the Northeast nor the South. There were too many Western interests to be subserved—such as the threat of an increased tariff, the matter of internal improvements at Federal expense, and the question of free lands—for it to devote its time and energy to crusading in behalf of the program of other sections. It was suspicious of the Northeast, recalling the hesitancy with which that section endorsed westward expansion and internal improvements, and feeling that its high-tariff policy was certain to be detrimental to the West. Nor was the Enquirer's regard for the dominant element in the South much higher. The planter aristocracy often promoted its own interests by sacrificing the welfare of the West, while the westerner was prone to believe that the southern gentleman was the antithesis of a true democrat. But the immediate bone of contention in 1860 was the effort of the South to translate the doctrine of popular sovereignty into a guarantee of slavery in the territories, together with the threat of disunion if its demands in the matter were not met instantly and completely. This was anathema to the average Westerner. The Enquirer spoke fervently of the "Great West" as a self-conscious unit and of Western interests as paramount to those of any other section.

Yet in spite of this militant sectionalism, the Enquirer, paradoxically enough, was distinctly unionist. A strikingly large element of Cincinnati's population was foreign-born, comprising people who knew and admired neither Northeast nor South, and who were not especially impressed by state lines. Their affection was for the West; their interest was in the maintenance of the Union. The reason for this lay in the fact that Cincinnati by 1860 had become an industrial city rather than a distributive commercial center, and depended upon markets in all the sections for her prosperity. As for the remaining portion of her purely distributive trade, it was divided between North and South, with the greater part, due to the new railroad connections, going eastward rather than southward. But it was not merely the industrial and commercial tie-up which made Cincinnati and the Enquirer unionist

in viewpoint. The Great West, in many of its forward-looking steps, doubtless needed the assistance of a central government representing a powerful, wealthy, and united people. If to these are added a sentiment for the Union and pride in its achievements, characteristics of the native-born population, the intensity of the unionism which the Enquirer bespoke is quite understandable.

In 1860, the administration of the Enquirer was chiefly in the hands of four men. Of these, the most important in many respects was Washington McLean, a major stockholder, a native of Pennsylvania, the Democratic political boss of Hamilton County (Ohio), the proprietor of the largest boiler yard in Cincinnati, and the friend and associate of leading business men and politicians throughout the nation. There was also S. B. Wiley McLean, Washington's brother, a native of Cincinnati, a stockholder in the Enquirer establishment, the business manager of the paper, and a man with independent holdings in the boiler industry. James J. Faran was another of the leading figures. Faran, who was a man of some education, had been born in Cincinnati. He was a lawyer as well as a journalist, a former member of the State Legislature and of Congress, an ex-mayor of Cincinnati, and the senior proprietor and editor-in-chief of the Enquirer. G. M. D. Bloss, a converted New Englander, was the fourth man in the Enquirer combination. He was a native of Vermont, a former lawyer, the managing editor and a stockholder in the paper, and one of the ablest political writers in the West. His conversion to the Western outlook had been complete. Although these men were Democratic in politics, and had a lively appreciation of the Whiggery which had crept into the newly organized Republican party, they were not pro-Southern. Theirs was the Democracy of Douglas, and not of Buchanan and Breckinridge.

With the convening of the Democratic National Convention of 1860, therefore, the Enquirer naturally supported Douglas, whom it believed to be the Western, unionistic, truly Democratic candidate. Faran himself was a delegate to the convention and a keen observer of the entire proceedings. It unquestionably was at his behest that Bloss, then actively in charge of the paper, endorsed the attitude of the majority at Charleston in standing their ground against the secession from the Convention of the delegates representing the lower South. The bolt distressed the Enquirer group greatly, but they comforted themselves with the thought that the withdrawal of the Southern extremists would strengthen the Democratic party immeasurably, both in the North, where "doughfaceism" could no longer be charged against the party leaders, and in the South, where it believed that disunionist opinion had few representatives.

For political purposes, in the course of the campaign, the Enquirer raised the specter of Southern secession if Lincoln should be elected, but, with typical Western misunderstanding of the intensity of the feeling in the South, it did not believe the cotton states would leave the Union. Discovering its error, however, early in November, it endeavored to work out a solution of the national difficulties which would square with its own political, economic, and patriotic ideals. It repudiated the idea of war because it believed that coercion was certain to culminate in separation either actual or psychological. Furthermore, war would be destructive to the federalistic concept of government and would be a staggering blow to democracy and individual liberty. An armed conflict would also upset the nicely balanced economic interrelationships between the sections and would likely be fatal to Cincinnati, which, even if it did not become one of the battlegrounds, would be injured by the closing of the river and by the repudiation of debts by former Southern customers. Naturally the boiler industry of the McLeans would not escape the general ruin. But, in addition to this, the Enquirer stood to suffer both indirectly and directly from war. Naturally its prosperity would be curtailed in a city of bankrupts, while the loss of its Southern subscribers would be a serious blow.

It seemed impossible, however, for the Enquirer to accept what seemed to be the logical alternative of war—permanent secession. Not only did sentiment and patriotism repel such an idea, but separation would also bring with it many of the disadvantageous features of war. For example, if disunion permanently closed the Mississippi to Western trade, the agricultural and commercial classes would be partially ruined and shippers for foreign export would be left to the mercy of Eastern railroads, freed from competition. Then there were the Western manufacturers who depended upon down-river markets to assist them in developing the strength to compete with Eastern goods in Western markets. Furthermore Cincinnati, as a border city, would probably lose its pre-eminence in the West, for capital would instinctively retire from a city which was subject to attack in case of war. Without doubt, permanent secession would be quite as calamitous as war to the Enquirer and the group for which it stood.

There was an important additional motive on the part of the Enquirer which cut across both its opposition to war and its repugnance to permanent disunion. This was political: the desire to force the Republican party to commit suicide by making concessions to the South and thereby permit the Democracy to return to power. This would do more than merely preserve peace and union. It would bring virtually unrivaled political ascendancy for the

Democratic party and would save the West from economic exploitation by the East, a circumstance which was to be feared if either war or secession should transpire.

At any rate, having thus pronounced against the only apparent means of solving the national troubles, the Enquirer, if it were to avert criticism of itself, was constrained to bring forth a constructive plan of its own. Its idea was to permit secession for the time being in order to strengthen the hands of the unionists in the South and then to entice the cotton states back under the flag by making some substantial concession to them. It did not recognize the right of secession nor deny the power of coercion. It felt merely that coercion was inexpedient, and that if the Southern people were given the opportunity to contemplate their situation outside of the Union, they would gladly return after reasonable and fair concessions were offered to them.

The tide of secession, believed the Enquirer, could be stemmed if Lincoln would voluntarily throw over the platform upon which he was elected and construct a new party out of anti-Democratic elements in both North and South, leaving out the Abolitionist influence. Or, better, perhaps, a convention of the border states could be summoned, which would agree upon a plan of settlement and demand its acceptance as the price of their adherence to the Union. The Enquirer went so far as to suggest the time and place of such a meeting.

When it became evident, however, that neither of these proposals was likely to bear fruit, the Enquirer turned to support compromise through Congressional action. It definitely underwrote the Crittenden Compromise which, by amendment to the Constitution, would have extended the Missouri Compromise line through the national domain. There is little doubt that the Enquirer spoke for Cincinnati on this point. It forced the Crittenden Compromise into the city election of 1861. Here a majority of the voters endorsed the plan, in spite of the frantic opposition of the Republican press, which seemed to prefer disunion to any fundamental concession. The Enquirer was highly encouraged by this turn of events,—an evidence, in its opinion, of the beginning of a reaction in favor of compromise which would sweep the country and force the Lincoln Administration to make terms with the South. Its elation was short-lived, however, for just at the moment when it believed that concession and reunion were about to be demanded in no uncertain tone by an aroused North and accepted in the proper spirit by an essentially loyal South, the firing on Sumter put a period to its heroic efforts for peace with union. On the following morning, it announced its complete adherence to the Northern cause.

In the enthusiasm which swirled through the North in the first weeks after Sumter, Bloss advocated a vigorous prosecution of the war without regard for any irritating restraint upon the Government imposed by the Constitution. His objective was peace and reunion just as soon as possible. Within a month, however, he had shifted ground. Maintaining that his patriotism had not diminished, he insisted that the highest type of loyalty lay in the defense of the rights and liberties of the people and the structure of the government, all of which would be destroyed if the war were waged in reckless fashion. But Bloss was not thinking merely of individual rights and the federalistic organization. He saw that the war was likely to continue longer than was popularly expected, and that the Democratic party was likely to die for want of an issue. If the constitutional issue could be drawn, however, the Democratic party would be saved, it might secure control of the Government, and it might make a belated peace with the South on the basis of concession and reunion. Bloss's original idea, then, was not to oppose the war as such, but to resist its prosecution along unconstitutional lines. This was to be the basis for an Opposition party, a group similar in some respects to the Whig Opposition in England during the American Revolution. It did not plan to aid the insurgent movement. It was not in opposition to the Government, but to men. A clear distinction was to be drawn between the Government and the Lincoln Administration, and the Enquirer would support the former while withholding its endorsement of the latter.

In order to secure a following for this program, Bloss found it necessary to portray some frightful danger which would strike terror into the heart of the average American. He discovered this in the idea that a centralized, consolidated, military despotism was imperiling the old-time federal structure and was about to devour the liberties of the people. He made this concept a rallying point for the Opposition and also a standard by which particular acts of the Administration should be judged. Anything which contributed to centralization and consolidation was automatically condemned. It is probably true that the editor was sincere in his view that a dictatorship was likely to result from the war, but there is every reason to believe that he did not think it likely that Lincoln would attempt to inaugurate it. Yet, in order that the Democratic party could secure control of the Government, Lincoln, whether guilty or innocent, must be made the butt of the attack.

During June and July of 1861, therefore, the Enquirer denounced Lincoln bitterly as the chief agent of despotism and charged him with making himself a virtual king. It vehemently

opposed the fusion of Democrats and Republicans into a proposed Union party because it feared that thereby the Democrats were being tricked into supporting a dictatorship. Although it urged the Democratic State Convention to draw the constitutional issue in the election, it was only partially successful. The Democrats refused to join the new party, but failed to adopt the constitutional issue in the election.

In September, when Faran supplanted Bloss as the active editor, the Enquirer suddenly switched from abuse of Lincoln to support of him. This change was not due to any belated resentment because the Democratic party had failed to accept the paper's advice concerning a platform. It seems to have been the result of Faran's fear that the radical element of the Republican party was planning the removal of Lincoln from office and the substitution for him of some person like General Fremont or General Butler who actually would establish a dictatorship. Although the Enquirer had been successful in maintaining the independence of the Democratic party for the time being, this lack of an issue upon which to stand appeared to give the party little chance of defeating the Republicans in the near future. Therefore Faran believed he might better endeavor to strengthen Lincoln against the radicals than to encourage them to remove him. For this reason, the Enquirer supported the President manfully, improving every occasion to point out the best aspects of his administration, and permitting the Democratic cause in the election to drift. The Republicans won the canvass of 1861, but the Enquirer was satisfied. The Democratic party was still in the field, ready to exert its power when times were more propitious. In the meantime, the fight of the President, with Democratic support, against the radicals was marked by his revocation of Fremont's slave proclamation in Missouri, and by the eventual removal of the Pathfinder from his command in the West.

In this fashion, then, the proposed emancipation of the slaves became, by the winter of 1861-1862, a symbol to the Enquirer of the translation of the Government into a consolidated, centralized despotism. Emancipation to Faran was a sufficient cause for the Enquirer to turn against the war itself, since it involved not merely a change of issue in the struggle, but would be so arbitrary an exercise of power as to mark the threshold whereby the nation would enter a state of complete subservience to dictatorship. But other factors also re-enforced the Enquirer's opposition to emancipation. It would render virtually impossible the peaceful reunion of the states and undermine the prosperity of the South, upon which, to some extent, the well being of the West depended. Again, it would release a flood of free negroes

which probably would deluge Cincinnati and southern Ohio, constituting an economic and social problem of major proportions.

The Enquirer's fight against emancipation, then, was not rooted in sympathy for the South. It was the product of political, economic, social, and even patriotic considerations which, if they expressed the interests of any section, bespoke most definitely those of the West. Under these circumstances, the Enquirer continued to support Lincoln against the radicals, until he gave unmistakable signs of weakening before their attack. That Faran spoke the mind of Cincinnati on the matter of emancipation would seem to be indicated by the Wendell Phillips riot of March, 1862. This disgraceful episode did not arise from partiality for the South, but was really a product of Phillips' intemperate language in defense of emancipation and his boast that he was essentially a disunionist. The rowdy element of the city reacted exactly as might have been expected under the circumstances.

In any case, as time went on, Faran, feeling that Lincoln was about to succumb to radical pressure, deemed it expedient to turn against the President completely, and devote his entire effort to the success of the Opposition party. There seemed to be nothing more to gain through support of the Administration. The editor did not, however, accuse the President of personally endeavoring to establish a dictatorship, as Bloss had done in 1861. Rather his attitude was that Lincoln was no longer entitled to Democratic support inasmuch as he had failed to hold his own against the consolidationists of his party.

Accordingly, the Enquirer participated indirectly but somewhat actively in a mass meeting of May, 1862, called for the purpose of injecting new life into the Opposition party. At this juncture, Lincoln very nearly upset all calculations by stiffening in his opposition to the radicals and revoking General Hunter's proclamation concerning the slaves in South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia. The Enquirer thereupon renewed its distinction between the President and the radicals, but, since the stake was larger, it could not virtually abandon the Opposition party as it had done in 1861. In this case, a Congressional election was in the offing, and it was an election in which the Enquirer hoped that the Democracy might succeed and thus be in a position to make peace on the basis of the Union. Therefore its policy became dual in nature. It refrained from serious criticism of the President and even from time to time indicated a favorable attitude toward him. But campaign thunderbolts were hurled against Congress, in which the radicals were firmly entrenched, with all the gusto of men sensing certain victory.

By July, however, the Enquirer felt that Lincoln was so

hard pressed by the radicals that it would be necessary for the Democratic press to come to his assistance if it were to prevent him from taking action upon slavery before the conservative attitude, as represented by the Democratic party, was endorsed by the voters in the election. Therefore it rallied to his support again and pointed out clearly that the Republican abuse of the President was the result of his resistance to the radical emancipation policy.

Under these circumstances, the issuance of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, late in September, was a distressing blow to the Enquirer. Its unrestrained attack upon Lincoln at this time augured that if the radicals should carry the election in spite of the new issue of emancipation, it would oppose no longer merely the manner in which hostilities were being waged, but would turn against the war itself and endeavor to carry its party with it.

After leading the Democratic campaign during the last weeks with the slogan "The Constitution as it is, the Union as it was, and the Negroes where they are," it had the satisfaction of witnessing an overwhelming Democratic victory in Ohio, where the election was held in October. Nevertheless, realizing that the Democrats might not be so completely successful in the November elections in other states and might fail to secure undisputed control of Congress, it advised Lincoln, if he would avert disaster to his own party, to revoke the Emancipation Proclamation. Faran was playing a shrewd game. He wanted the Proclamation revoked, both for constitutional reasons and for the purpose of removing an insuperable obstacle to peace under the Union. If he could secure this end by sacrificing a complete Democratic victory, he was willing to do so. Certainty in the matter was highly desirable at any cost. On the other hand, he felt reasonably sure that if the President did not see fit to issue the revocation, the Democrats would most probably pile up impressive majorities in the other States. In that event, when the new Congress convened, they could themselves revoke the obnoxious pronouncement.

The wisdom of Faran's decision that it would be unwise to depend too much upon an apparent "sure thing" was revealed when the Democrats failed to win a majority of Congressional seats in the election of 1862. Nevertheless, the Enquirer continued to insist that the Administration had been definitely rebuked and should revoke the Proclamation. When it was evident that Lincoln had no intention of doing this, the editor turned from opposing the manner of conducting the war to a denunciation of the war itself. In place of his advocacy of a vigorous prosecution of hostilities under constitutional restraint while efforts were being

made to restore peace under the Union, he now pressed for an armistice. This new tack was probably due to the realization that the Democrats would now have to wait two years before another general election would afford them the opportunity to secure control of the government by running on the constitutional issue. Therefore, unless the war were to continue indefinitely, it was necessary to force the hand of the Administration by whipping up popular sentiment to the very verge of revolution. If this effort to compel the President to yield should fail, there was always the election of 1864 to look forward to, when the Democrats almost certainly would be restored to power and could negotiate the peace themselves.

In the course of this agitation for peace, the Enquirer was led nearly to the point of advocating a Northwest confederacy. It did not, however, endorse the idea, and there is no evidence to indicate that its publishers really desired it, except, perhaps, as a consequence of the complete success of the South in the war. Rather, Faran appears to have utilized the proposition for the purposes of propaganda. He seems to have endeavored to scare the Republican conservatives into support of the peace policy in order to avert such a catastrophe, and he may have intended to impress upon Lincoln the possibility of losing the West if the war, which was going none too well, should culminate in the success of Southern arms. Actually, there is little reason to doubt that the Enquirer was still distinctly unionist in the early part of 1863.

Nevertheless, its idea of the only way to prevent a complete smash-up of the Union was to effect an immediate peace, and it ardently utilized what seemed to be the only weapon at its command—defeatism. Hammering upon every conceivable feature of discontent, it pointed out that the continuance of the struggle would only aggravate existing abuses. Peace had become virtually indispensable, it insisted, but Faran was careful to be clear that the peace he demanded was a peace under the Union. As a matter of fact, he argued, every additional day of war made peace the more remote, so that true unionists, if they were wise, would support the program sponsored by the Enquirer. Faran was possibly correct in his insistence that the Administration had not once, in the course of the war, taken any steps to see whether peace on the basis of the old Union and the Constitution were possible. Certainly his stand was justifiable if it were true that a majority of Southerners by 1863 were sick of the war and not averse to reunion. In any case, the Enquirer so believed.

That the Enquirer was ahead of its constituency in urging an armistice is indicated by the defeat of the Democrats in the city election of 1863. In spite of the efforts of the Democracy

to avoid a discussion of the matter, the Republicans forced the issue of war or peace upon them and defeated them badly. The Enquirer showed some signs of being checked in its extreme attitude, but it was not completely gagged until the promulgation of General Burnside's Order #38. This was designed to stifle defeatist discussion, but it reopened the constitutional question in a very direct and flagrant fashion.

Order #38 resulted in the arrest, trial, and banishment of Clement L. Vallandigham, an arbitrary procedure which virtually forced the apparently reluctant Democratic party to accept the Dayton firebrand as its gubernatorial nominee in 1863. The party, regardless of Vallandigham's reputation as the foremost peace man in the country, refused to make peace or war an issue in the campaign, but concentrated on the issue of constitutional liberty. Still smarting under the defeat in the city election, the Enquirer acquiesced in this, and carried on valiantly with the constitutional issue alone. It flatly denied that Vallandigham had any idea of disunion and insisted that the question of war or peace did not enter into the canvass. There is no reason to doubt, however, that if Vallandigham had been elected, the Enquirer would stridently have declared that his choice was a vindication of his peace principles.

In spite of Democratic protestations that peace was not an issue in the campaign, the Republican press attempted to make the election turn upon that question alone. A blunder by Vallandigham, conducting his campaign from Canada, seemed to lend validity to the Republican case, so much so, in fact, that the Enquirer was forced to take up the matter for discussion. It was frank to admit that in general the Democratic party was the party of peace, but it attempted to protect the party interests by challenging its opponents to produce any real evidence that Vallandigham or the political organization he represented was truly favorable to the Southern cause. This seemed likely to end in obscuring the issue which the Democrats insisted was the only true one in 1863. If there was any danger, however, that the Enquirer might have been led off into a futile discussion, Lincoln's proclamation in September, suspending the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus generally, obviated it. Faran swung back, and, during the closing weeks of the campaign, pounded away incessantly against despotism.

The Republicans, nevertheless, clinched their case, if clinching were needed, by publishing an apparently forged letter from Vallandigham, written reputedly while he was exiled in the South and expressing whole-hearted approval of the Southern cause. Vallandigham was beaten by a majority of 60,000 in the state alone, a total which was swelled to 101,000 when the army vote came in.

The arrest of Vallandigham may have been a blunder from the Republican point of view, but, ending as it did in the arch-copperhead's nomination for governor on the Democratic ticket, it was a most fortunate one, if Ohio's remaining in the Union-Republican column was of any significance. It seems quite likely that any other Democratic candidate, in spite of Vicksburg and Gettysburg, would have been elected, but Vallandigham's supposed pro-Southern proclivities were too much for the party to carry.

With the election of 1863 out of the way, the Enquirer resumed the campaign against the war itself which it had abandoned at the time of Burnside's Order #38. It no longer, however, was attempting to force the Republican party to make peace. It was endeavoring to commit the Democratic party irretrievably to a definite peace policy, which its adherents, even in Ohio, had not yet accepted. If the Enquirer should have its way, there would be no possibility of misunderstanding the peace propensities of the Democratic party in the election of 1864. The policy it had advocated in 1861—vigorous prosecution of the war while negotiating for peace—would no longer do. The Enquirer wanted the party committed to an armistice, but it still insisted that it was unionist in its view.

In order to force the party to accept the idea of an armistice, the Enquirer entered upon a new campaign of defeatism. That this was aimed at the Democratic organization rather than at the Republicans is indicated by the fact that the editor frankly admitted that no hope was to be expected from the Administration. Sometime between November of 1863 and March of 1864, however, the Enquirer swung over to the idea of peace-at-any-price, peace with disunion if necessary. No specific event seems to have effected this change. Rather it was most likely the product of the editor's idea that the basic principle of the American system of government was self-rule, plus the eventual acceptance, for a time at least, of the fact that the South would have nothing to do with a peace under the Union. Accordingly, he now insisted that the Democratic party should become the vehicle not merely of peace, but, if it were unavoidable, of peace with disunion.

By this time the McClellan boom for the Presidency was under way among conservative Democrats. The Enquirer, of course, regarded it frigidly. It wanted no martial note in its program. Daily it delivered valiant blows in behalf of peace-at-any-price, and, so powerful was its appeal, that more moderate Democrats in the state began to consider ways and means of checking the extreme doctrines which it was advocating.

The Democratic party, by 1864, was divided into three well defined factions: the Ultras, or peace-at-any-price men; the

Moderates, or peace-by-negotiation men; and the Conservatives, or men who favored the prosecution of the war if it could be conducted under constitutional restraint. The Democratic State Convention of 1864, which would adopt a state platform and choose the delegates-at-large to the national convention, would reveal clearly which faction would lend its color to the state organization as a whole.

When the state convention met, the Moderates and the Conservatives, feeling that the Ultras had acquired such strength that they might, by virtue of the three-way division in the party, succeed in putting through their own program, agreed to bury the hatchet and unite for the purpose of heading-off the Ultras. This explains why Vallandigham was defeated as a delegate-at-large to the national convention and throws a considerable amount of light upon the state platform.

But in spite of the check to Ultra principles in the state convention, the Enquirer continued to battle for a peace-at-any-price stand by the national organization. The Moderate-Conservatives, feeling that the Ultras might stampede the convention if it were held on July 4, its original date, managed to secure its postponement until August 29. In their opinion, they had nothing to lose by postponement, and perhaps would gain everything if there should be a change in the military situation. On the other hand, the Ultras were not particularly distressed. They felt that the military situation probably would be worse in August than it was in July.

With Grant's heavy losses during the summer combined with Vallandigham's electrifying return to Ohio and his triumphant election as a district delegate to the Chicago convention, the peace sentiment seemed to be gaining ground daily. In reality, however, the available evidence in the case points to the fact that the intense desire for peace among Western Democrats was restricted to peace under the Union and did not embrace peace-at-any-price to any great extent.

At any rate, so formidable had the peace sentiment become by August that McClellan's backers believed that he must come out publicly in favor of an armistice if he expected to secure the nomination. At about the same time, representatives of the Moderate-Conservative faction called Washington McLean into conference in an attempt to work out with him a compromise program upon which the entire party could stand.

Either as a result of this meeting or because of his parley with the Confederate commissioners in Canada, where he may have been led to believe that the Southern states would accept reunion on the basis of the Constitution as it was, McLean seems to

have agreed to effect a change in the Enquirer's policy. Certain it is that before the National Convention met the journal had abandoned its peace-at-any-price stand and was back on the basis of a negotiated peace under the Union. Nor is there any doubt that McLean attended the National Convention and did everything in his power to effect the nomination of McClellan. But McLean did not emerge from the campaign empty handed. He secured in the platform the commitment to peace which the Enquirer clique had anticipated since the fall of 1863. Furthermore, two of McLean's friends were taken care of by means of the Chicago nominations. Pendleton, a deserving Democrat from Cincinnati, was the vice-presidential nominee, and his place in the House of Representatives was thereby made available for George E. Pugh, another McLean associate. It was not without reason that the Enquirer, in spite of its previous announcement of distaste for McClellan's candidacy, was one of the general's warmest supporters during the campaign.

But the Democratic platform of 1864 proved to be a rock of disaster. While it did not, as is usually claimed, contain a clear-cut statement of Vallandigham's views, it did call for an armistice. It was not a disunionist document per se, but conditions were such in 1864 that an armistice might easily lead into unintentional acquiescence in disunion if the Democratic party were successful. This fact, together with the alleged radical peace proclivities of Pendleton and the fact that Vallandigham claimed to be the chief architect and interpreter of the platform, caused a large number of people to believe that Democratic success might result in the disruption of the Union. Although most Westerners in 1864 heartily desired peace, it hardly can be denied that under no circumstances did they wish peace with disunion. The McClellan manuscripts contain ample evidence to support this contention.

The Northern military victories in September, 1864, usually are considered as the determining factor in the autumn elections, but if Democratic testimony is worth anything, the unfortunate platform determined the outcome even before the battles were fought. McClellan himself, after yielding to the pressure of the radical peace men in the first drafts of his letter of acceptance, saw the pitfall in the platform and attempted to retrieve the situation by insisting that no armistice should be granted until the South had recognized the supremacy of the Union. It was to no avail, however. The damage had been done, and the Democratic candidates were overwhelmingly defeated, losing the West along with the East. While McClellan ran a better race than Vallandigham had done in 1863, the Opposition was virtually demoralized by the defeat.

With the election of 1864 a matter of history, the Enquirer was left virtually rudderless for a time. Its hope for peace through the agency of the Democratic party was gone. And yet, the economic, constitutional, and political reasons which had motivated its drive for peace since 1861 still existed. To effect this result which it desired above all things, however, the journal could not afford even then to endorse vigorous prosecution of the war as a means. A conqueror's peace would be nearly as disastrous to the West and to the Democratic party as disunion. Regardless of the defeat in 1864, the Enquirer still found it impossible to abandon its fervid advocacy of a peace without victory.

Accordingly, without any agency for securing peace by direct means—or even any hope of such—the Enquirer was reduced, in the winter of 1864-1865, to straight-out defeatism, virtually gambling with the Republican leaders that it could stir up sufficient dissatisfaction with the continuation of the war to bring it to an end before they could subjugate and devastate the South to the extent the radical element seemed to desire. The difficulty of this task, in view of the victories favoring Northern arms as the foundations of Southern military power crumbled away, is obvious. Yet Faran had little to lose, and he fought the good fight valiantly.

Early in January of 1865, learning that the Confederacy seemed likely to make an agreement with France and England whereby its independence should be recognized in return for its liberation of the slaves, Faran once more became the advocate of peace at any price. He felt it wiser to be practical rather than sentimental. If the Confederacy were certain to buy its success from Europe in this fashion, why should not the Federal Government forestall such action by itself according recognition and securing the advantage of favorable treaties which the European nations hoped to extort? Yet Faran still looked upon dissolution as a last resort. This fact is attested by the hopes for success which he pinned upon the Blair mission to Richmond. Alternating between elation and despair, he followed closely the events culminating in the Hampton Roads conference. The failure of the conference left him with nothing to hope for, and driven to desperation, he boldly intimated that revolution was the only salvation for the average man. But this attitude was not of long duration. Time healed somewhat the wounds of his disappointment, and Faran abruptly abandoned the idea of revolution.

In spite of the breakdown of the peace negotiations in February, the Enquirer continued to hope against hope that somehow a peace by accommodation rather than one by conquest could be brought about. Therefore, up to the very time of the collapse of

the Confederate cause, it continued, first, to oppose any legislation which might act as an obstacle to peaceable reunion, and, second, to continue with its effort to undermine the war party by means of editorials saturated with defeatism. It was for this reason that it fought bitterly the passage of the thirteenth amendment through Congress.

While the Enquirer was at the height of its defeatist activities, word reached Cincinnati that Richmond had fallen. The surrender of Lee's army shortly thereafter indicated beyond doubt that the war was over and that peace without victory, for which the Enquirer had battled since the firing on Sumter, was an impossibility. Accordingly, it adjusted itself to the new situation and began to prepare a fresh campaign in the interests of the next best thing for the West—the immediate and unconditional restoration of the Southern states to their place in the Union.

Understanding fully the strength of the opposing forces, and seeing clearly that 1866 would indeed be the critical year for the future, the Enquirer undertook avidly the thankless task of rebuilding the Opposition upon the basis of a conciliatory as opposed to a vindictive reconstruction policy. Seizing upon the matter of negro suffrage in Ohio as a nucleus around which to organize the demoralized Democracy, it had, by the fall of 1865, contributed its full share into whipping the Opposition party into something like its earlier strength. The Union Republican majority was cut down from 101,000 in 1863 and 60,000 in 1864 to only 30,000 in 1865. There was every reason to believe that in 1866 the Opposition would give a good account of itself, and it was not beyond the realm of possibility that it might succeed in securing control of the Government. Time alone would tell.

The Enquirer, then, was not pro-Southern in its viewpoint during the war. Its attitude appeared to be governed by what it believed were the interests of its own section. It favored peace during the war for the same reasons it had opposed hostilities from the beginning, and not from any pro-Southern sympathy. It confined itself to opposing the manner in which the war was conducted until it believed the issue in the war had been changed. Then it turned upon the war itself. On the whole it was unionistic in its outlook, drifting into a peace-at-any-price stand only after it had come to believe that the Union-Republicans, under Eastern domination, had passed up the opportunity to close the war on a reasonable basis, and were engineering a constitutional revolution while they despoiled the West economically. Having reason to believe, some time later, that the South might reconsider its irreconcilable position, the Enquirer returned to its position of a negotiated peace. It relapsed into peace-at-any-price again for

a short time in 1865, but throughout this period the evidence is strong that it had not entirely given up hope for a restoration of the Union under the Constitution.

The Enquirer was important during the war for the leading part it took in forming the Opposition party in the West and for the telling issues it formulated in the various political campaigns. From time to time it outran its support, but on such occasions it returned to more conservative ground and worked patiently to mold public opinion along the lines it desired. At the close of the war, it led off in the reorganization of the Opposition in order to avert a vindictive reconstruction of the South, and the election of 1865 revealed that it spoke for a powerful minority which might easily become a majority by the critical year of 1866.

